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Sens. Allen and Stamas declare second annual 'Snowmobile the North' tour huge success

LANSING – State Sens. Jason Allen and Tony Stamas, joined by fellow legislators, recently wrapped up a snowmobile tour that included stops in Gaylord, Alpena and Mackinaw City, allowing them to witness firsthand the major economic impact tourism has on northern Michigan.

"Traveling by snowmobile is the perfect way to experience winter in northern Michigan," said Stamas, R-Midland. "It is clear the economic impact snowmobiling has on cities throughout northern Michigan."

Allen and Stamas were joined by Rep. Kevin Elsenheimer, R-Bellaire, former Speaker of the House Rick Johnson and Michigan Snowmobile Association President Rick Brown.

The trek began and ended in Gaylord, with stops in a number of area towns, including: Atlanta, Alpena, Millersburg, Onaway, Posen, Cheboygan, Mackinaw City, Levering, Alanson and Indian River.

"Snowmobile and winter tourism are critical to many northern Michigan business owners and their families," said Allen, R-Traverse City, chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor. "Tourists from all over the Midwest travel to northern Michigan to sled, ski, fish and enjoy our winter wonderland. Local businesses, such as gas stations, hotels, restaurants and general stores see direct financial benefits from winter tourism generated by outdoor enthusiasts. It was great to be able to promote our regions winter economy on a snowmobile."

Michigan has more than 6,000 miles of groomed trails offering exciting terrain of forest and field to both residents and visitors. With almost 400,000 registered snowmobiles, contributing over \$1 billion to the state economy.

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Editor's note: A number of photos from Sens. Allen and Stamas' trip will be available for download on the Senate Majority Photowire at:

http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Allen/Allen.htm